

To state that the place qua physical environment in which the performance of a work of art is given is an important factor to be considered if the spectator is to be able to appreciate aesthetically a given performance does not in most instances mean--as some spectators contend--that the spectator's position relative to the stage in a valid space-for-performance is a crucial factor in determining whether the spectator will be able to appreciate aesthetically a given work of art--a valid performance of the Brecht/Weill The Threepenny Opera can be appreciated aesthetically from the third row of the orchestra or from the last row of the balcony. Spectators who refuse to believe that to be true fail to understand that a spectator seated in the third row of the orchestra can be psychically overdistanced from a given performance just as a spectator seated in the last row of the balcony can be psychically underdistanced from a given performance. All of which does not mean that from every seat in a valid space-for-performance that a spectator who is interested in and capable of appreciating aesthetically a given performance can appreciate aesthetically that performance certainly not. There are in virtually all of the major concert halls opera houses theatres in the world many seats from which for two reasons it is impossible for spectators seated in those seats to appreciate aesthetically that which takes place on those stages (1) the spectators in question can not see the stage--columns, balconies, railings and soon and on literally block their view of the stage. How many of the 2600 seats in the Opera in Paris for example are so placed/how many of the 1500 seats in the Teatro La Fenice for example are so placed? (2) the spectators in question are physically too far from the stage to be able to perceive clearly what takes place on the stage even though they are able to see the entire stage from where they are sitting--which does not mean that the space in question is an invalid space-for-performance but it does mean that it is an invalid space for some performances. Think for a moment about Constitution Hall in Washington, DC and think about the number of seats in that house from which it would be virtually impossible to appreciate aesthetically a valid performance of for example one of the six sonatas for cello and harpsichord of Antonio Vivaldi because one would be prevented from clearly perceiving that performance. Certainly the space qua physical environment is an important factor to be considered in thinking about the spectator's response to a work of art.